

# The Athenian Mercury.

Quest. 1. **W**hy the generality of Male or Female die in the Night?

*Ans.* We question the truth of the Observation, unless when the Moon happens to change then; — if at other times any such thing be, we are rather apt to believe, it happens for want of suitable assistance than any other more general or secret Reason.

Quest. 2. *W*hy the naked Gospel, mention'd in the Gazette, July the 3d. shou'd be censur'd and burn'd for an Heretical Pamphlet?

*Ans.* The Athenian Society have no mind to a Visitation, and therefore are resolved to let the Question alone to be decided at the day of Judgment.

Quest. 3. *I* hang'd a Cat lately in my Garden full of Kittens, and when she was a dying the Kittens cry'd within her. *I* demand whence they had Air to make that Sound?

*Ans.* We have had this Question before, however it being a diverting point, I shall further add, The more cruel — Rogue — you for your pains, thus with one Cord to destroy a whole Generation. But to answer your unanswerable Question, The truth of Fact we easily believe, the same accident having sometimes happen'd to *Humani Births*. But that there is Air in the Body, none ever question'd. — Wind is a Degree more than Air, or Air compressed; — this we are sure is in the Body, — because it comes out on't. But this you'll say, is, not to talk like an *Anatomist*, — nor wou'd it be very civil to do so, only we'll say, that Nourishment being convey'd to the *Fætus*, Wind may be also, and no Effect is, as we see by the *Childs* being often injur'd by such windy Nourishment.

Quest. 4. *W*hether a Spiritual Substance hath distinct parts?

*Ans.* No distinct *Physical* parts, as a Body hath, for then 'twou'd be a Body; but *Metaphysical*, of Essence and Existence, &c. or such like may be granted; — we mean in such *Spiritual Substances* as admit of Composition, for there can be no Composition without different parts to be compounded. — But in that most simple *Being*, the first uncompounded *Essence*, and *Father of Spirits*, those who allow any parts deserve as heavy an *Anathema* from *Philosophy* as *Divinity* has already given 'em.

Quest. 5. *W*hether the Seat of the Soul be in the Glandula Pinealis?

*Ans.* That the Soul operates in the Head in another manner than in any other part of the Body, and that the Function of Thinking or Reasoning is perform'd there, our very Sincers do almost teach us, by that sort of pain which we feel there after any intense meditation; as we have formerly observ'd. There we say it must be, because there it operates, one of which unanswerably follows upon the other; but how it is we are as much to seek as how it operates, and where as how, if the precise point, or place be demanded, Monsieur des Cartes Opinion was generally embrac'd in the last Age, who finding that small Gland in the Head, which had no use by *Anatomists* assign'd thereto, he concluded it the Principal and Immediate Seat of the Soul, but later *Anatomists* have since found a much lower Office for it, and that Fancy of his is as much decry'd as it was heretofore almost universally embrac'd.

Quest. 6. *W*hy shou'd a Blockhead have One out of Ten?

*Ans.* The Querist is beholding for that sharp thought to Mr. Bays his last Play, as Bays himself stole the only few good things there from Tasso's Poem of the Siege of Jerusalem, — who being himself reputed a Blockhead to make a Parson of, has railed at 'em all with or without occasion ever since. — But let the Wit be whose 'twill, we'll here answer it. The Question is, — Why shou'd a Blockhead have One out of Ten? our answer is, — For the same Reason that a greater Blockhead has the other Nine, and that is, — because the Law gives it him.

Quest. 7. *W*hether the Queen of Sheba, if now living, might not receive as ample Satisfaction from our Modern Virtuosi in any of the Questions she proposed, as she did from Solomon, and if so, whether he still deserves to be reputed the wisest of Men?

*Ans.* To the first part, — we answer, — No certain

h, — for his *Wisdom* was inspir'd, as well as gotten by *Observation*, whereas our *Philosophers* have only the latter way of attaining it. If the Question had been, — Whether *Solomon* might not be ignorant of many things which we now know, the case had been much alter'd; tho' this might even there be said, — that we know not of any such Questions she proposed to him; and besides that, many things we now know, and look upon as new *Discoveries*, *Solomon* might then be well acquainted with. There's scarce any new *Invention* in *Philosophy* has made such noise as that of *Circulation*, which yet some *Ingenious Men*, not improbably affir'd to be known to *Solomon*, and that he *Æmigmatically* describes it in the 12th of *Ecclesiastes*, — by the *Whul* broken at the *Cistern*, — however we are sure by his works he was excellently skill'd in *Morality* and some part of *Natural Philosophy*, which he had to that height, that he may still enjoy the Title of the *Wisest Man*.

Quest. 8. *W*hy should the putting a Man's Hand in cold Water occasion a sudden emission of Urine, notwithstanding his being fast asleep?

*Ans.* That [notwithstanding] has lost its way, for if at all it must be when a Man's asleep, otherwise he must have a care where he washes his Hands: Nor is there any difficulty in the *Emission* when sleeping, more than waking, as appears by their *Sheets* who have not the *Reactive Faculty* then, tho' at other times they are stanch enough. But we need not have wasted all these words about it, for we can assure the Reader, 'tis a perfect *vulgar Error*, as a thousand other receiv'd *Opinions* are, and has nothing at all of *Truth* in it, — at least, in those *Experiments* which we have made about it.

Quest. 9. *W*here the Romish Infallibility besides during the vacancy of the Papal Chair? [This was proposed and answered before the Choice was finished.]

*Ans.* Not in the *Pope*, — for the last is in *Purgatory*, and his Successor not yet in *Being*. Not in a *General Council*, for there's now no such thing; — not in *Pope* and *General Council* together, because there's neither of 'em in *nature* a-funder: Not in the *Universal particular Roman-Catholick Church*, for the *Eldest Son* of it, the *most Christian King*, is as good as turn'd *Turk*, and worse than all that, is so ungracious, to call his Mother *Whore*. Not in the *Cardinals*, for then poor *Infallibility* wou'd be torn all to pieces, — there wou'd be *French Infallibility* against *Spanish Infallibility*, and the *Zelots Infallibility* at *Daggers* drawing with both. — Things being in this posture, we think it very dangerous to interpose in such a Battel-Royal of *Creeds*, lest they should all agree and fall upon us for *Meddlers*; — however thus much we'll venture to say, tho' they shou'd threaten us with the *H. Inquisition* it self, that whenever the poor half *Spiteb-Cockt Fathers* agree where to place this rambling *Infallibility*, it must be either *K. Lewis's Gold* or *K. William's Sword* will have the *Casting Voice*.

Quest. 10. *W*hether Birds have any Government?

*Ans.* The *Birs*, (and they are the *Musits Birds*) certainly have, and that a very regular one. But lest any shou'd be so unkind to degrade those pretty *Creaturs* into *Flijs* or *Insects*; we'll instance in some of a little larger *Wings*. All *Birds*, and *Beasts*, and *Fishes* too, have thus much of *Government*, that the *wikter* obeys, and the *stronger* rules, — but still whether there's any other *settled Subordination* of power amongst 'em we suppose is the Question. 'Tis observ'd in all your *Season-Birds*, or those which go and come at slated times of the Year, that they *fly* in *Troops*, and use a constant order in their *Marches*, regarding the *Wind*, and throwing themselves into such a *Body* as is most convenient either to *move against* or *with* it, as their occasions serve. They have, besides their *Scouts* and *advanc'd Guards* before to *scour* the *Country*, or *discover* an *Enemy*; see *Bochart de Ciconia* — *in anim. Sacr.* And if that does not satisfie, read *Bergerac's Super-celestial Navigations*, and you'll have the exactest account of their *Order*, *Laws*, *Government*, and manner of living that you can any where meet with.

Quest. 11. I find it reported in a History, that *Aineas* liv'd in the days of *Abdon* Judge of *Israel*, in the year of the *World*, 2790, and that *Dido* was *Granddaughter* to *Ethbaal K. of Sidon*

Sidon and Tyre, whose Daughter Jezebel was married to R. Ahab; so that by this Aeneas must have liv'd long before Diodes, and all the Historians and Poets fabulous, in what they relate of their Acquaintance and Amours; — whether of the Two is more probable?

Ans. The best Chronologers and Historians on this Question inform us, — That Ethbaal, or Ithobaal, or Jutobaal (for by all those names he is call'd) had a Grandson, whose name was Melimus, who had two Sons, Pygmalion and Barcas, and two Daughters, Eliza or Dido, and Asra. That Pygmalion having murdered Sicheus, Dido's Husband for the sake of his Trias, as Julian and others tell us, Dido in the Seventh Year of his Reign sailed into Afric, and built Carthage, which happened by Computation 143 years after the building of Solomon's Temple, which was about some 289 after the Destruction of Troy, — when Aeneas was in a bad Condition to make a Lover of, for he must have been rotter in his Grave many years before. However, 'tis Injustice to blame the Poet for this mistake in Chronology, which he was not oblig'd to take any care of.

Quest. 12. Do you believe the Romans in their greatest Power had so many Soldiers as the present French K. suppose it be true what is said, — that he hath four hundred and fifty thousand men, besides all that are oblig'd to wait upon him by Proclamation, viz. his Militia and Nobles?

Ans. That Computation of four hundred and fifty thousand men, or as some have stretch'd it, five hundred thousand, in the K. of France his Garrisons and Armies, was made when he look'd so big, that the World was almost afraid to think he had less, or question any thing that cou'd be said of his Power; — but now we are got a little near him, the Lion is not so dreadful, nor his Guard near so numerous as we then apprehended. Even at the Siege of Mons, when he drew together almost all his Forces, and left his Frontiers to the Rhine quite uncover'd, he amounted not on all that side of the Countrey, even in their own Computation, to much above a hundred thousand, which he was immediately after the place was sold and deliver'd, forc'd to hasten back by long Marches, and a great part of 'em, to the Rhine, Savoy, and other places. — If we consider him at present, — he has not, according to our Gazette, above fifty thousand, but let's suppose it to be 60 now in his Army in Flanders, and yet de Lorge is scarce twenty thousand on the Rhine, and finds his Heels his best defence against Saxony. Catinat at most, not thirty thousand in Savoy, whence too he's retiring as fast as he can. — Now shou'd we be so liberal, as to reckon these three Armies together to amount to two hundred thousand, which they do not, by not much above half the number, what shou'd we still do for the other two hundred and fifty thousand, or where shall we find 'em? Not in Garrisons, for at that rate he must have above sixty Garrisons, — each upward of four thousand men, whereas he has drain'd or quitt'd as many as possible, — not in the Field, where it now most stands him in stead to have 'em, the Turks being on the point of making Peace with the Emperor, if they have not already done it, for want of that Diversion which the Grand Signior's dear Brother and Allie promis'd to give the Germans on this side of Europe; and the K. of England prissing him every day with so Vigorous and Numerous an Army, and chating his best General and all his Forces from one Wood to another, like a parcel of Robbers rather than Soldiers. Thus much of the K. of Francis Forces, — for that of the Old Romans, at such distance we are not like to get a very exact account of 'em. — That which we produce shall be from good authors, Dio and Polybius; the first gives us the number of their Legions, the other, of all their Forces, including their Auxiliaries and Allies. Dio tells us, Augustus reaue'd the Legions from twenty five to nineteen or twenty, to which were afterwards added thirteen more, as we find from the Inscription of an old Column given us by Dempster; and by other Princes six more were still added, in all Thirty eight. Now every Legion consisted in the heighth of the Roman Empire, of Six thousand Foot, and Seven hundred thirty two Horse, sometimes more, which multiply'd by Thirty eight amount to 255816. Add to this their Auxiliaries, which, tho' Dempster tells us, were not so many as their Legions, yet did undoubtedly amount to a much greater number, which appears to any who consult Polybius his account of their General Master, even before they had subdu'd the Gauls, Britains, or many other Nations, — when invaded by the Gauls under their two Kings, — Concolitanus and Aetius, they and the Forces under their Command, and

just within their call, ready to march on occasion, were reckon'd at Seven hundred thousand Foot, and Seventy thousand Horse.

Quest. 13. In the History of St. Paul's Conversion, 'tis said in the Acts, — " Those that were with him heard the Voice, but saw no Man, cap. 9. v. 7. But, cap. 22. St. Paul says, — " They saw the Light, but heard no Voice. — And in ver. 26. — " They fell down to the Earth: — But in cap. 9. v. 7. — " They stood speechless. — Are not all these Contradictions to each other?

Ans. By no means. — For the First, — A Man may be said to hear, and not to hear the same thing, at the same time; — to hear a Sound, but not distinctly understand the Words. — Thus, when we are at a Sermon, at too great distance from the Preacher, we hear the sound of every Word, and yet truly say we can't hear one Word; that is, distinctly and intelligibly. Thus exactly it was in the present Case. For the second Difficulty, — How they cou'd see, and not see: — That's yet more easie. — They saw no Man, no Person, no Body, understand, — but they saw a Light; — one of which is far enough from the other. For the Third, — How they fell down, and yet stood speechless: — This too may rationally be accounted for, according to our common way of Expression. " Why stand ye here all the Day idle? is no more than, Why are you idle all the Day? — And we commonly enough, — Do not stand fooling; that is, — Don't fool; — though the Person we address to may be sitting, as well as standing.

Quest. 15. Who in your Judgment, have wrote clearest and closest concerning the late Revolution?

Ans. There have been so many excellent pieces written on this great Subject, that 'tis not easie, nor perhaps modis to command one above another, or determine which is best; — and of these, very many, nay, by far the larger part, written by Clergy-men, so little reason have some persons to reflect on the Loyalty of that Great and Learned Body, — The measures of Christian Subjection, &c. one of the first written, seems to go to the very bottom of the Cause. A Dialogue whereto the Judgment of the Reverend — Bishop Sanderson is given and examined in this Subject, is very clear as far as the lawfulness of our Subjection, Submission and Allegiance to present Government, as are Dr. Shovel's Reasons, and many others. The Observator, and the Northern Vicar, were at it very early, seem pretty well match'd, and as much of Argument on both sides are in most of what has appear'd on the Subject. There's a little Book said to be Dr. P — gs, which is as clear and home on both Branches, both the *de facto* and *de jure* part, as can be desir'd; — and when the Second Part of a late excellent Book, called, — God's way of disposing Kingdoms, — comes abroad, those who scruple at Allegiance to the present Government will either be satisfied, or none but a rougher sort of Argument will make 'em so.

Quest. 15. How cou'd a Serpent speak with the Voice of a Man, as in the History of Eve, when Speech is the Property of Man only?

Ans. While things run on in the ordinary course of Nature we acknowledge Speech is the Incommunicable Propriety of a Man, but where that holds no longer, neither does this. If the Devil made use of a real Serpent to tempt our first Parents, as most are inclined to believe, he might with as much ease also make use of his Organs, or rather form new ones, or perhaps, make words in the Air without any such Organs, to accomplish his Ends.

Quest. 16. Did Adam lose the Image of God after he had sinned, and what was that Image of his wherein he was made?

Ans. These Questions are near a kin, and their Resolution depends on each other. — We'll begin with the last, — Wherin that Image of God consisteth in which Adam was made? We believe it consisted in knowing, willing, and acting, and that all according to the highest perfection of Humane Nature. In knowing, and therein especially in Reason, — in willing, — or that liberty he was then entirely Master of, whereas now he has but a maim'd Branch of it left, little more than a sad Liberty to Evil, — and in acting or exercising virtuous Habits, — all which being extremely weaken'd or disa'e'd by the fall, those few Noticks and Rains of Knowledge, Liberty, and Goodness which yet remain, are rather now a weak and watery reflexion of that Image, than the same with what was out first, so gloriously enstamped upon the Nature of Man.